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PRESS RELEASE

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Former Senior Executive For U.S. Postal Service Pleads Guilty To Bribery, Offered Contracts in Return For Payments - Defendant Took Total of \$15,000 in Cash -

WASHINGTON - Ron Middlebrooks, a former senior executive with the U.S. Postal Service, pled guilty today to a bribery charge stemming from his acceptance of \$15,000 in cash from a businessman he promised to reward with government contracts, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

Unbeknownst to Middlebrooks, the businessman was working with law enforcement.

Middlebrooks, 47, of Lawrenceville, Georgia, pled guilty in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to receipt of a bribe by a public official. The Honorable James E. Boasberg scheduled sentencing for November 7, 2011. Under federal sentencing guidelines, Middlebrooks faces a likely sentence in the range of 24 to 57 months imprisonment and a fine of up to \$100,000. As part of his plea agreement, he agreed to resign from the Postal Service.

“This executive exploited his power to award government contracts to extract cash bribes,” said U.S. Attorney Machen. “He did a great disservice to the many honest government employees who serve the public every day. This prosecution shows that the U.S. Attorney’s Office, working closely with our law enforcement partners, will hold accountable the criminals who sell out the public for their own personal gain.”

According to a statement of facts submitted to the Court, Middlebrooks was the Postal Service’s director of International Civilian and Military Transportation and Networks, a senior executive position that was based in Washington, D.C. His official duties included managing international networks for civilian and military mail, including logistics contracts for all classes of mail worldwide. He also was responsible for developing and implementing contingency plans to ensure that disruptions of global civilian, military, and/or international mail operations were resolved quickly and effectively, including during times of war.

In November 2010, Middlebrooks met with an executive for a business identified in the court filings as Company A, a freight shipping airline with government contracts with the U.S. Postal Service. He told the executive that he wanted Company A to buy two real estate properties from him, which he owned personally. In exchange, Middlebrooks would provide the company with increased business transporting mail for the Postal Service.

The executive contacted Middlebrooks for a follow-up meeting. Unbeknownst to Middlebrooks, however, the executive was cooperating with law enforcement. On two occasions, on December 13, 2010 and then again on January 5, 2011, Middlebrooks accepted money from the executive with the understanding that he would reward Company A with business. Both times, the men discussed plans for Company A to purchase Middlebrooks's real estate properties.

During the first meeting, the defendant accepted an envelope containing \$10,000 in cash. Following this meeting, Middlebrooks directed that Company A receive an emergency contract to ship international mail that needed to be shipped on short notice.

In December 2010 and early January 2011, Middlebrooks and the executive had several telephone conversations discussing how Middlebrooks would increase the company's business with the Postal Service in exchange for the company purchasing his properties at an above-market value price that he had set.

During the second meeting, Middlebrooks accepted an envelope containing \$5,000 in cash. During that meeting, Middlebrooks told the executive, "you're gonna be sure as hell glad you met me" because he intended to follow up and increase Company A's business.

In announcing the guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Machen thanked those who worked on the case from the U.S. Postal Service's Office of Inspector General, including Sheila Brock and Samuel Simpkins. He also commended the efforts of Assistant U.S. Attorney Jonathan Haray, who is prosecuting the case.

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